

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended) A ~~television~~ system for generating a list of suggested suggesting scheduled television programs ~~to a user~~ comprising:

means for receiving television program schedule data comprising broadcast time and characteristics of scheduled programs;

means for receiving characteristics data for a television program being viewed by a user;

means for storing at least one characteristics relevancy factor;

means for storing a table of characteristic weights for a user;

means for periodically incrementing characteristic weights in said table based on said characteristics data for said television program being viewed by said user and said at least one characteristics relevancy factor;

first user interface means for selecting a future time period and for requesting a list of suggested television programs scheduled to be broadcast during said future time period;

second user interface means for selecting between a first mode wherein ~~programs~~ a television program having a plurality of characteristics wherein at least one of said plurality of characteristics has a zero weight in said table of characteristic weights for a user ~~can be suggested~~ is included in said list of suggested television programs, and a second mode wherein ~~programs~~ a television program having at least one characteristic which has a zero weight in said table ~~are not suggested~~ is not included in said list of suggested television programs;

and processor means for generating said list of suggested television programs by sorting said schedule according to said characteristics of scheduled programs, said table of characteristics weights for said user, said mode selection, and ~~any~~ said future time period selection.

2. (Cancelled)

3. (Currently Amended) The ~~apparatus~~ system of claim 1 wherein said characteristics comprise Topic and Theme, and wherein if said first mode is selected,

average weights for a plurality of Topics in a program are added in calculating a program weight.

4. (Currently Amended) The ~~apparatus~~ system of claim 1 wherein said first of said at least two modes is a default mode and said second of said at least two modes can be selected at said user interface.

5. (Currently Amended) The ~~apparatus~~ system of claim 1 wherein said future time period is determined by a user selectable start time, stop time, and, optionally, broadcast day or days.

6. (Currently Amended) The ~~apparatus~~ system of claim 4 further including user interface means for saving a selected future time period as a default.

7. (Currently Amended) The ~~apparatus~~ system of claim 1 wherein said characteristics comprise Topic and Theme in a format Topic_Theme, and said characteristics weights are the sum of the number of time periods a program having a particular Topic_Theme is viewed by a user times the characteristics relevancy factor of said of said Topic_Theme.

8. (Currently Amended) The ~~apparatus~~ system of claim 1 further including means to identify one of a plurality of users; and means to store a mode selection and/or a future time period selection of said identified user in a user profile.

9. (Currently Amended) The ~~apparatus~~ system of claim 1 wherein one or more programs can be selected from said list of suggested programs displayed at said user interface and added to a user plan to view list.

10. (Cancelled)

11. (Previously presented) The method of claim 21 wherein said user may select a start time, and/or a stop time.

12. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 21 wherein a user selected time period can be saved as a default.

13. (Previously presented) The method of claim 21 wherein a list of up to a predetermined number of programs meeting any user selected time period and desired characteristic criteria is displayed, in order of characteristic weights.

14. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 21 wherein upon sorting a list of suggested programs is displayed and a user may select a program from said list, whereupon said user is reminded of any selection from said list at or before the time said selected scheduled program is broadcasted.

15. (Cancelled)

16. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 21 wherein said characteristic weights are based on time watched and said at least one characteristics relevancy factor on a scale of 1 to 10 of characteristics of programs watched by a user.

17. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 21 wherein said characteristic weights are stored in counters which are incremented by said at least one characteristics relevancy factor for each time period during which a user views a television program having the characteristic and said at least one characteristics relevancy factor included in said program's broadcast information.

18. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 21 wherein said time period is five minutes and said counters are incremented by said at least one characteristics relevancy factor upon expiration of each said time period.

19. (Cancelled)

20. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 21 wherein said first of said at least two modes is a default mode and said second of said at least two modes may be selected at said user interface.

21. (Currently Amended) A method for sorting a television program schedule to assist a user in selecting a television program for viewing or recording based on characteristics of television programs previously watched by said viewer comprising the steps of:

receiving a schedule of television programs to be broadcast comprising scheduled broadcast time and characteristics of said programs;

maintaining a user profile which comprises characteristics weights based on programs previously watched by said user;

allowing said user to select a future time period;

allowing said user to select between a first mode and a second mode for generating a list of suggested television programs;

periodically incrementing said characteristics weights according to a weighting algorithm comprising:

$$Wp = (Rel1 * Cth1 + Rel2 * Cth2 + \dots + Reln * Cthn) + C2 * (Ct1 + Ct2 + \dots + Ctn)$$

wherein:

Wp is a weight for a program in a program schedule guide;

each of Cth1, Cth2... Cthn corresponds to a value in a counter in the user profile for each of at least one characteristic comprising a topic and a theme in a format Topic_Theme that the program belongs to;

each of Rel1, Rel2... Reln is a corresponding characteristics relevancy factor for the each at least one Topic_Theme in the program, p;

each of Ct1, Ct2... Ctn is an average weight for a plurality of Topics in the program;

$$Ct1 = (Cth11 + Cth12 + \dots + Cth1m) / m ;$$

Cth11 is the counter value for Topic 1_Theme 1, Cth12 is the counter value for Topic 1_Theme 2,... Cth1m is the counter value for Topic 1_Theme m;

$$m \text{ is a Theme number in a first Topic; } Ctn = (Cthn1 + Cthn2 + \dots + Cthnp) / p;$$

Cthn1 is a counter value for Topic n_Theme 1;

Cthn2 is a counter value for Topic n_Theme 2,...

Cthnp is a counter value for Topic n_Theme p;

p is a Theme number in an nth Topic;

wherein in said first mode, C2 is set to 1; and

wherein in said second mode, C2 is set to 0 and if any Topic-Theme counters corresponding to Topic Themes in a program, p, are 0, then $W_p=0$;

and generating a list of suggested television programs within said selected future time period based on said characteristics of scheduled television programs and said characteristic weights in said user profile,

wherein if said first mode is selected, a program having at least one characteristic which has a zero weight in said user profile can be suggested, and wherein if said second mode is selected, a program having at least one characteristic which has a zero weight in said user profile can not be suggested.

22. (Previously Presented) An apparatus for suggesting scheduled television programs to a user for viewing or recording based on characteristics of television programs previously watched by said viewer comprising:

means for receiving a schedule of television programs to be broadcast comprising scheduled broadcast time and characteristics of said programs;

means for maintaining a user profile which comprises characteristics weights based on programs previously watched by said user;

first user interface means for allowing said user to select a future time period;

second user interface means for allowing said user to select between a first mode and a second mode for generating a list of suggested television programs;

first processor means for periodically incrementing said characteristics weights according to a weighting algorithm comprising:

$$W_p = (Rel1 * C_{th1} + Rel2 * C_{th2} + \dots + Reln * C_{thn}) + C2 * (C_{t1} + C_{t2} + \dots + C_{tn})$$

wherein:

W_p is a weight for a program in a program schedule guide;

each of C_{th1} , C_{th2} , ... C_{thn} corresponds to a value in a counter in the user profile for each of at least one characteristic comprising a topic and a theme in a format Topic_Theme that the program belongs to;

each of $Rel1$, $Rel2$, ... $Reln$ is a corresponding characteristics relevancy factor for the each at least one Topic_Theme in the program, p;

each of C_{t1} , C_{t2} , ... C_{tn} is an average weight for a plurality of Topics in the program;

$$C_{t1} = (C_{th1} + C_{th2} + \dots + C_{thm})/m ;$$

Cth 11 is the counter value for Topic 1 Theme 1, Cth12 is the counter value for Topic1_Theme2,... Cthlm is the counter value for Topic1 Theme m;

m is a Theme number in a first Topic; $Ctn = (Cthn1 + Cthn2 + \dots + Cthnp)/p$;

Cthn 1 is a counter value for Topic n Theme 1;

Cthn2 is a counter value for Topic n_Theme 2,...

Cthnp is a counter value for Topic n_Theme p;

p is a Theme number in an nth Topic;

wherein in said first mode, C2 is set to 1; and

wherein in said second mode, C2 is set to 0 and if any Topic-Theme counters corresponding to Topic Themes in a program, p, are 0, then $Wp=0$;

and second processor means for generating a list of suggested television programs within said selected future time period based on said characteristics of scheduled television programs and said characteristic weights in said user profile, wherein if said first mode is selected, a program having at least one characteristic which has a zero weight in said user profile can be suggested, and wherein if said second mode is selected, a program having at least one characteristic which has a zero weight in said user profile can not be suggested.

23. (Currently Amended) A method for generating a list of suggested ~~suggesting~~ scheduled television programs to a user comprising:

receiving television program schedule data comprising broadcast time and characteristics of scheduled programs;

receiving characteristics data for a television program being viewed by a user;

storing at least one characteristics relevancy factor;

storing a table of characteristic weights for a user;

periodically incrementing characteristic weights in said table based on said characteristics data for said television program being viewed by said user and said at least one characteristics relevancy factor;

selecting a future time period and for requesting a list of suggested television programs scheduled to be broadcast during said future time period;

selecting between a first mode wherein ~~programs~~ a program having a plurality of characteristics wherein at least one of said plurality of characteristics has a zero weight in said table of characteristic weights for a user ~~can be suggested~~ is not